



Alliance for
Health Policy and
Systems Research

Why is health policy and systems research important for low- and middle-income countries? The significance of academic research for health care in a fragile state.

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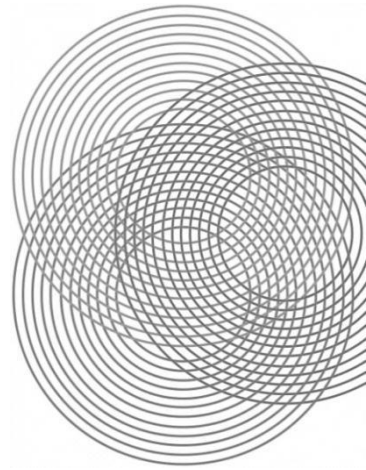
Alliance for Health Policy and Systems Research



World Health
Organization

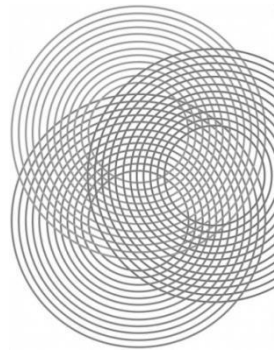
Outline

- What is the problem
- State of capacity
- Shift in thinking
- Likely solution



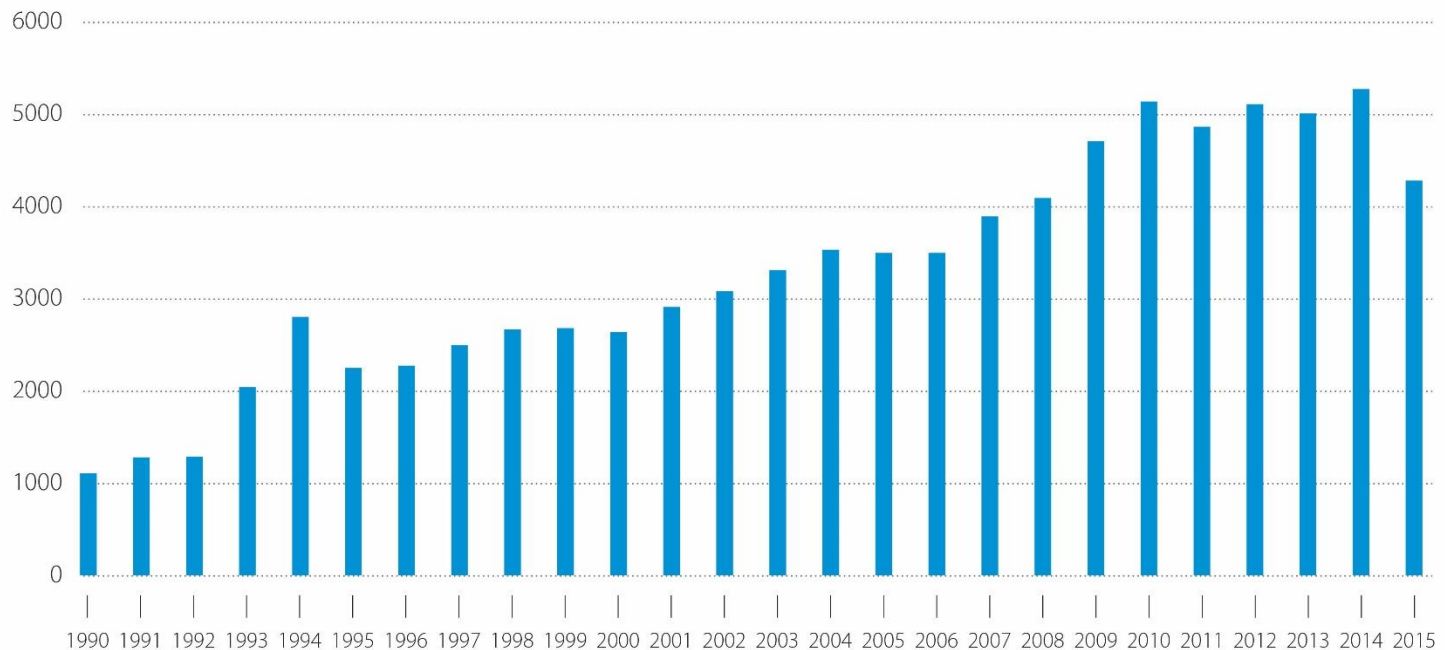
The problem

- The central problem that motivates us is that there is insufficient use of knowledge for enhancing health system performance.
- There is a lack of information on the performance of health systems and on how policies affect performance; and
- Even when knowledge is available, it is not necessarily known to, or used by, policy makers.
- The availability of knowledge and its appropriate use are both associated with low capacity to produce and disseminate research.



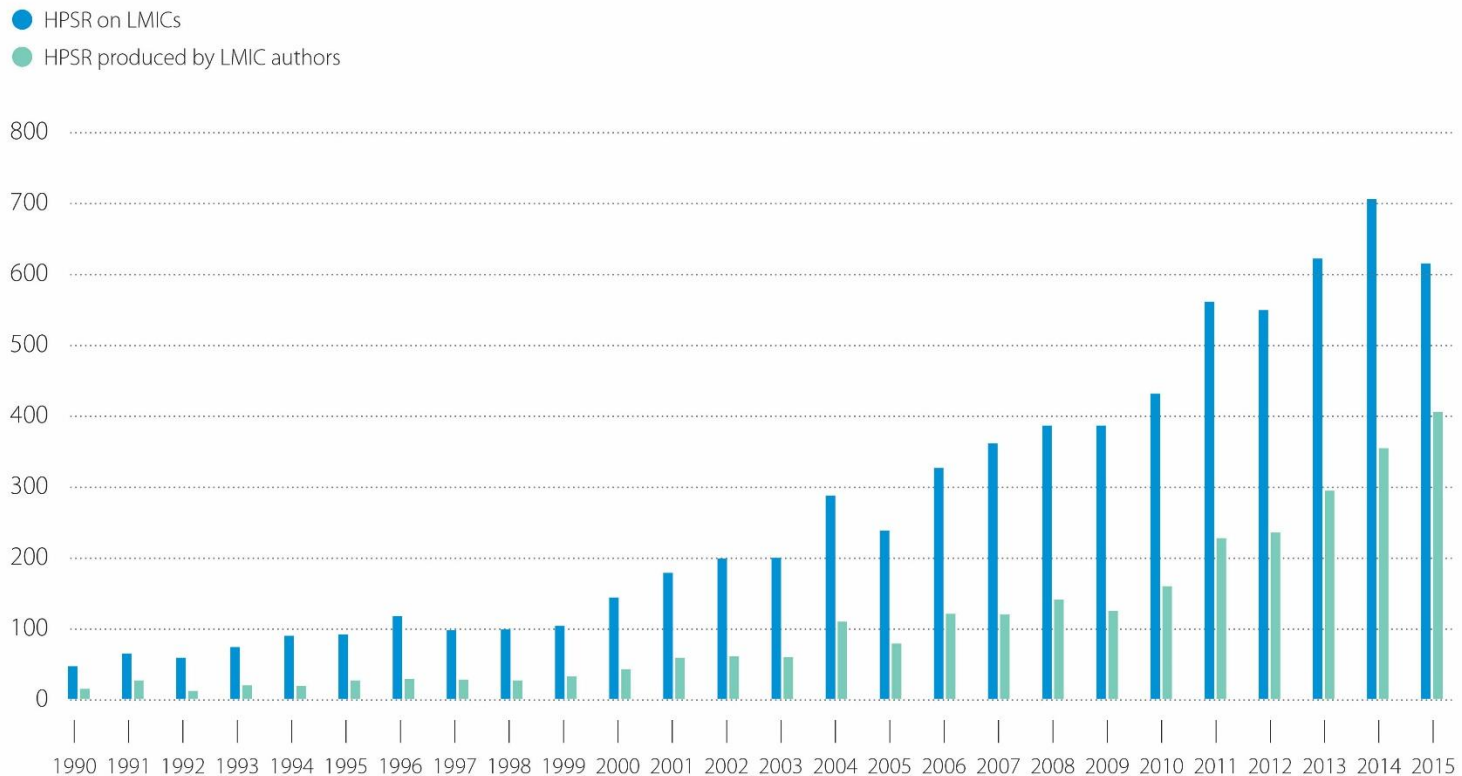
Growth of the field – increasing publications

FIGURE 1. Number of HPSR publications (all countries, all publications), 1990–2015



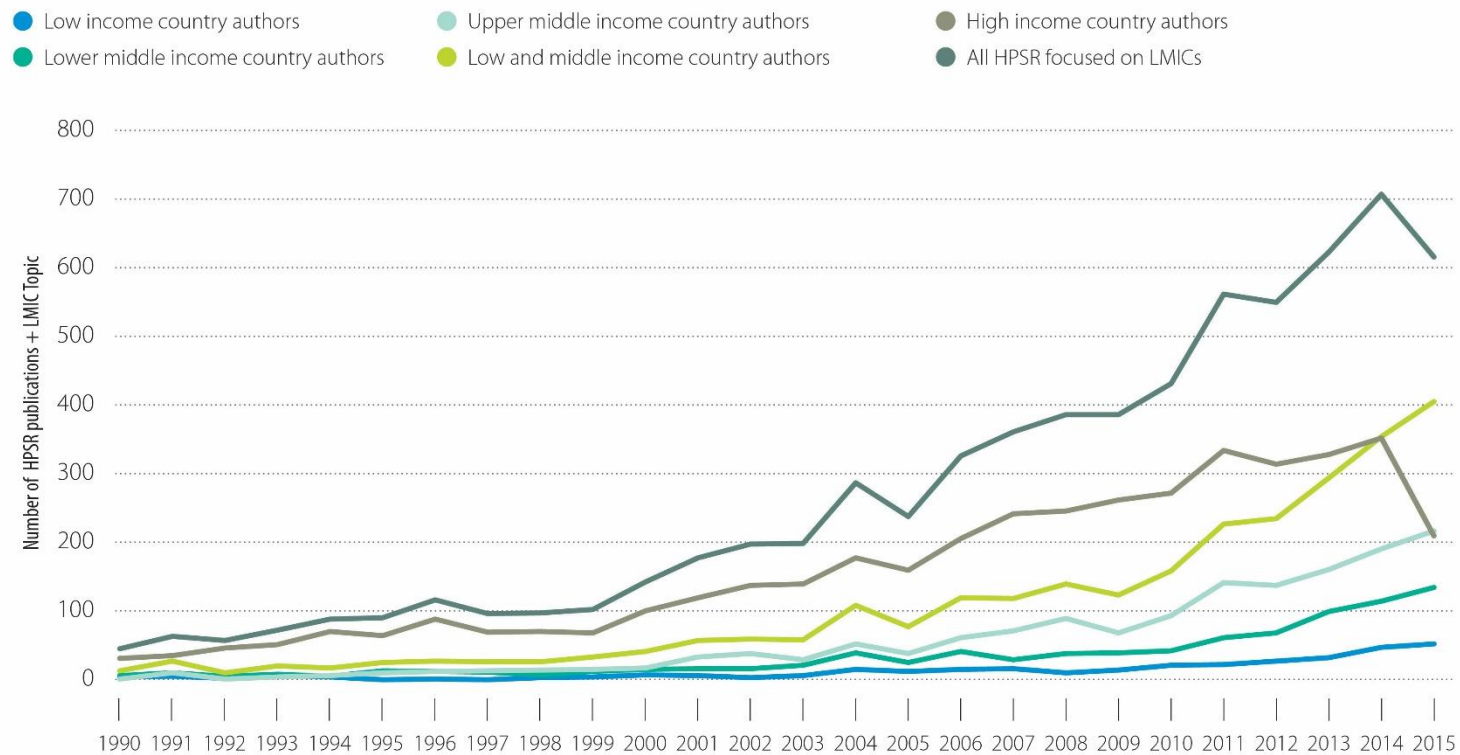
Growth of the field – increasing publications

FIGURE 2. Number of HPSR publications focused on LMICs and those produced by LMIC authors, 1990-2015



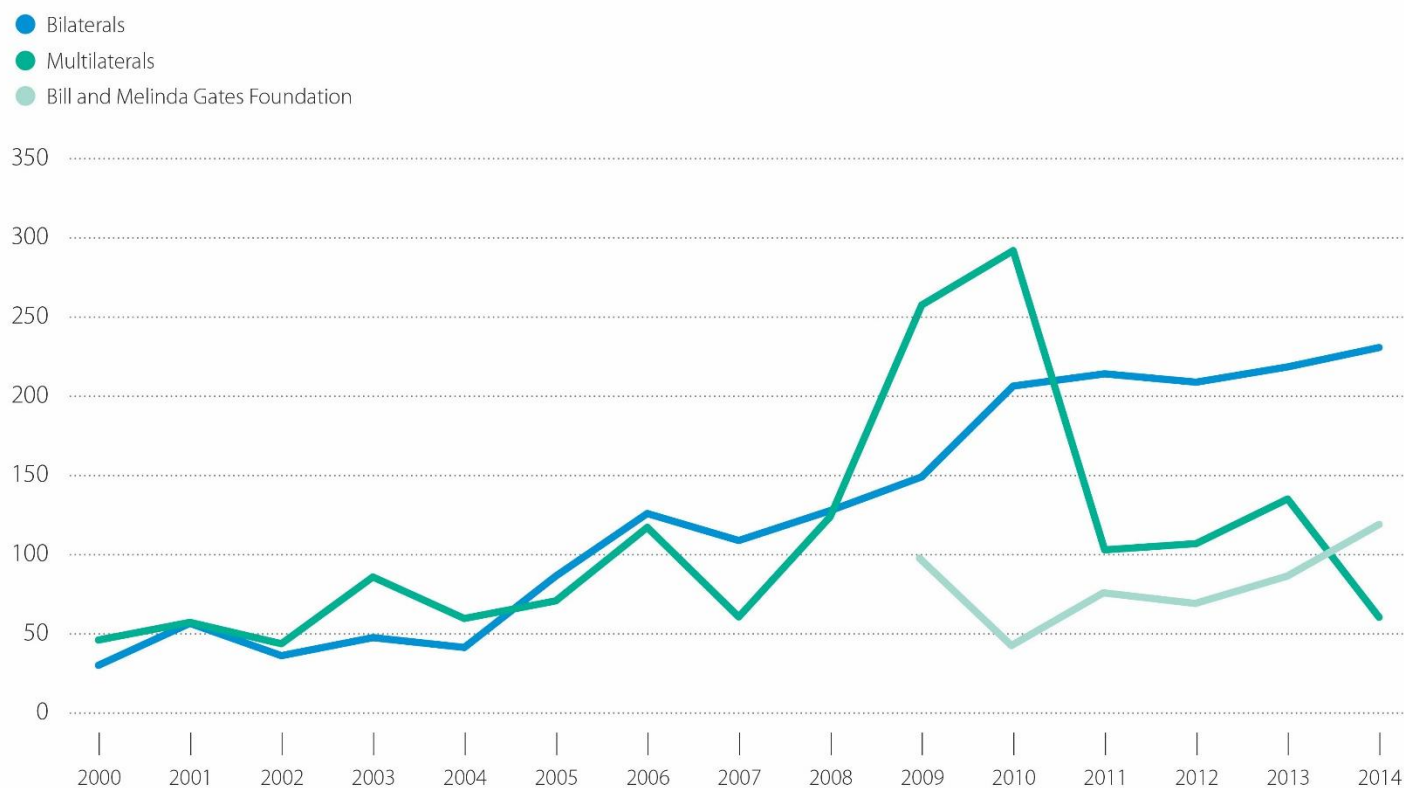
Fastest growth in LMIC lead authors

FIGURE 3. Lead authorship by income group of HPSR publications focused on LMICs, 1990-2015



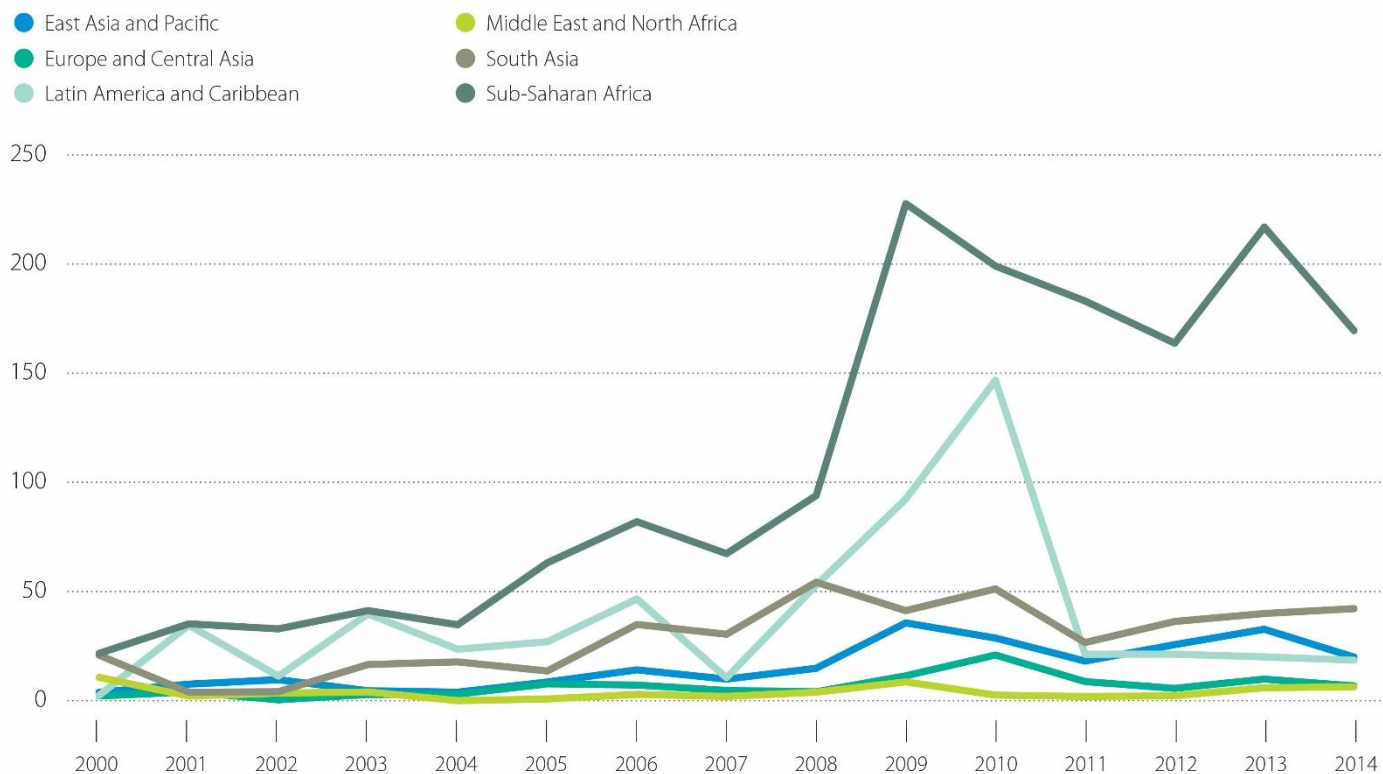
Unsteady funding for HPSR in LMICs

FIGURE 8. Trends in HPSR funding by donor type, 2000–2014



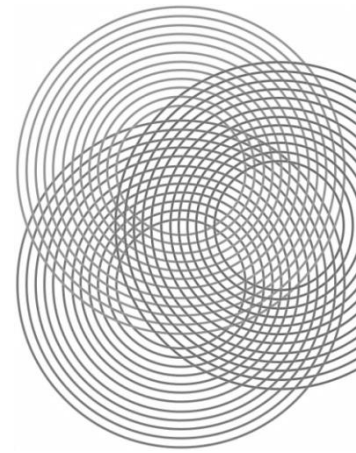
HPSR funding concentrated in Africa

FIGURE 9. HPSR funding by recipient region, 2000–2014



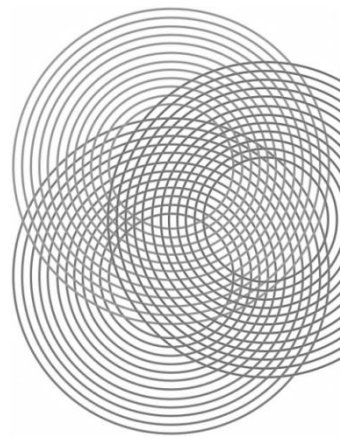
Shifting our thinking

- Separation of '*knowing*' and '*doing*' a false dichotomy



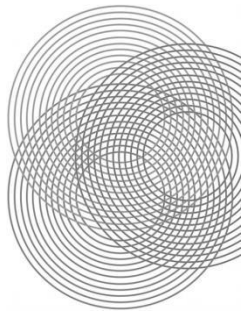
Shifting our thinking

- Separation of '*knowing*' and '*doing*' a false dichotomy
- Evidence-*based* to evidence-*informed*



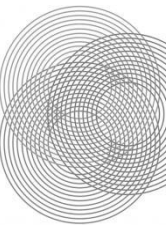
Shifting our thinking

- Separation of '*knowing*' and '*doing*' a false dichotomy
- Evidence-*based* to evidence-*informed*
- *Recommendations to options*
“Policies for health are social choices, and the ways in which they are formulated and implemented matter very much in determining ... either a virtuous or a vicious cycle between [a society’s] level of development and the workings of its health system.”



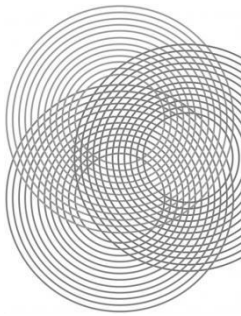
Shifting our thinking

- Separation of '*knowing*' and '*doing*' a false dichotomy
- Evidence-*based* to evidence-*informed*
- *Recommendations* to *options*
- *Translational* research to *transformative* research



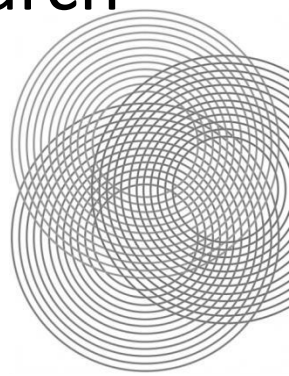
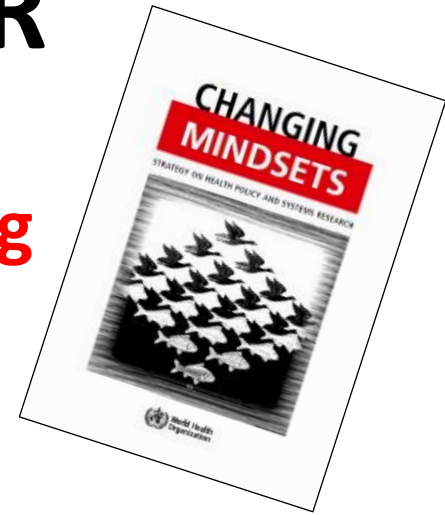
Shifting our thinking

- Separation of '*knowing*' and '*doing*' a false dichotomy
- Evidence-*based* to evidence-*informed*
- *Recommendations* to *options*
- *Translational* research to *transformative* research
- Towards a learning health system that continually responds to changing contexts



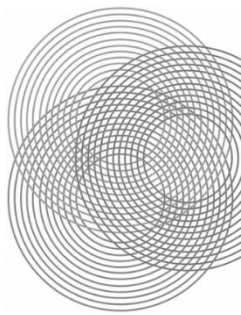
WHO Strategy on HPSR

- **Embed research within decision-making processes**
- Support demand driven research
- Strengthen capacity for research and use of evidence
- Establish repositories of knowledge
- Improve the efficiency of investment in research
- Increase accountability for actions



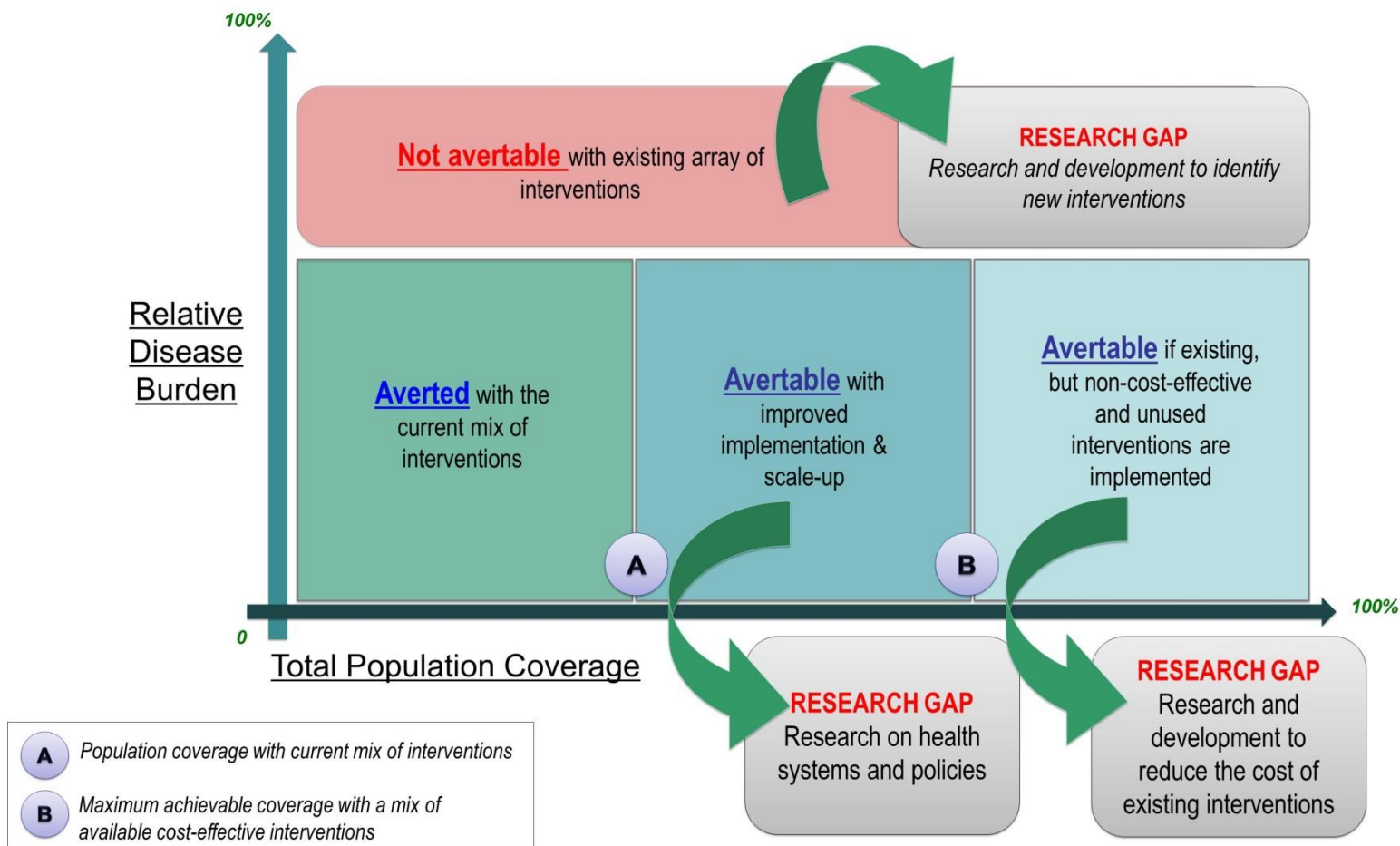
World Health Report 2013

- Research for Universal Health Coverage
- Calls for **research to be embedded as a core function of the health system.**
- Increased international and national investment for research to improving health service coverage.
- Closer collaboration between researchers and policymakers.
- Countries to build research capacity by developing a local workforce of well-trained, motivated researchers.



Analysing the burden of a health problem to identify research needs

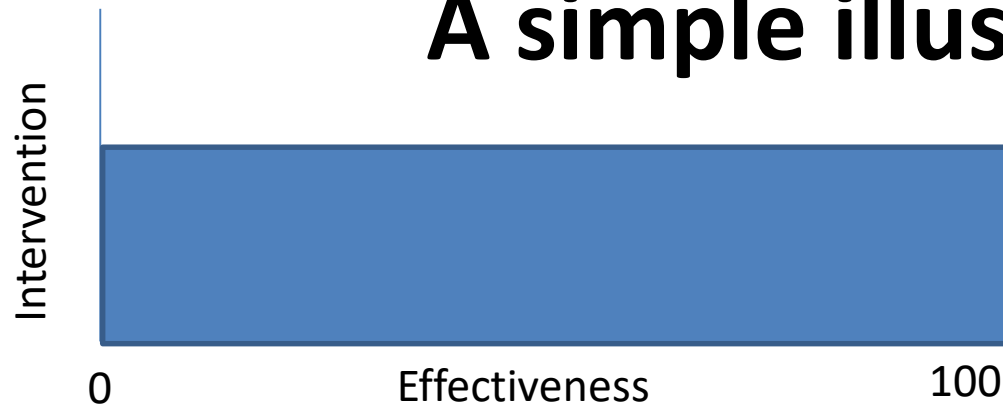
Relative shares of the burden that can and cannot be averted with existing needs



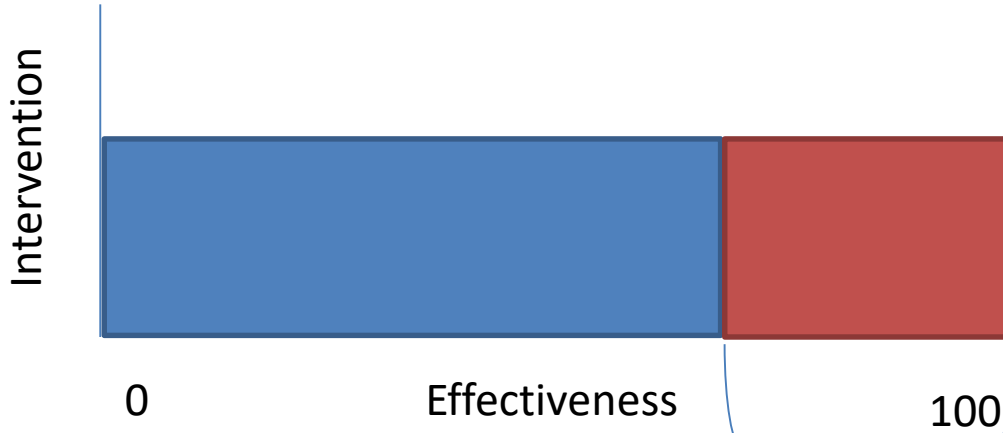
Ultimate goal

- Money to generate and use knowledge for the optimal achievement of the results of a program (full implementation of a program) should not be seen as “research” but included into the program budgets by national policymakers

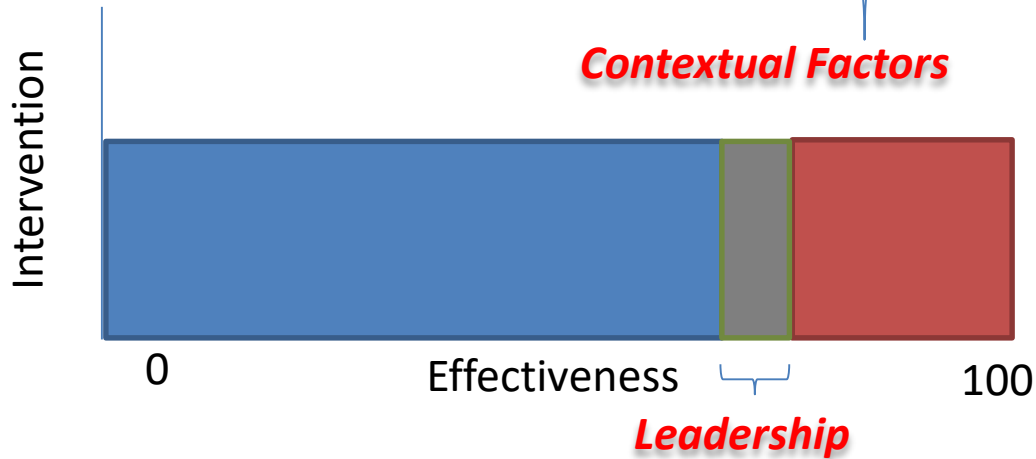
A simple illustration



Scenario A: Ideal Context

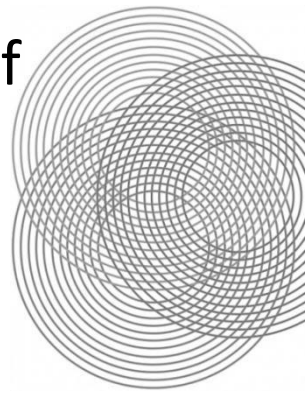


Scenario B: Changed Context

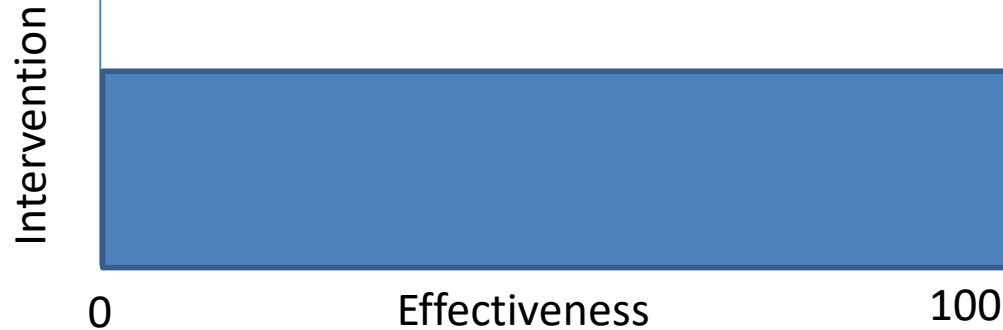


Moving forward: key questions about evidence use and effective leadership

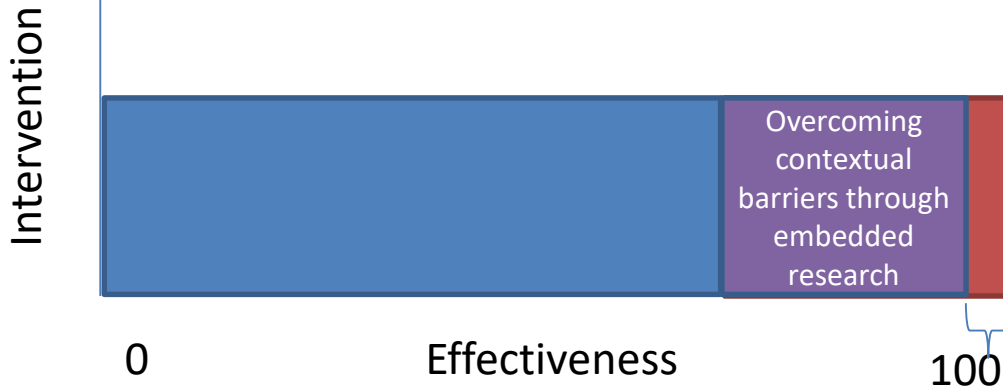
- How to facilitate the formation and implementation of effective health interventions and policies?
 - Decision-making complex process and evidence is only one part of it
 - Less about providing a single 'right' answer but rather about identifying options and informing 'sound choices'
- How to support the learning capacities of health systems so that research becomes a core function of the system (the concept of embedded research)



A simple illustration: Post embeddedness

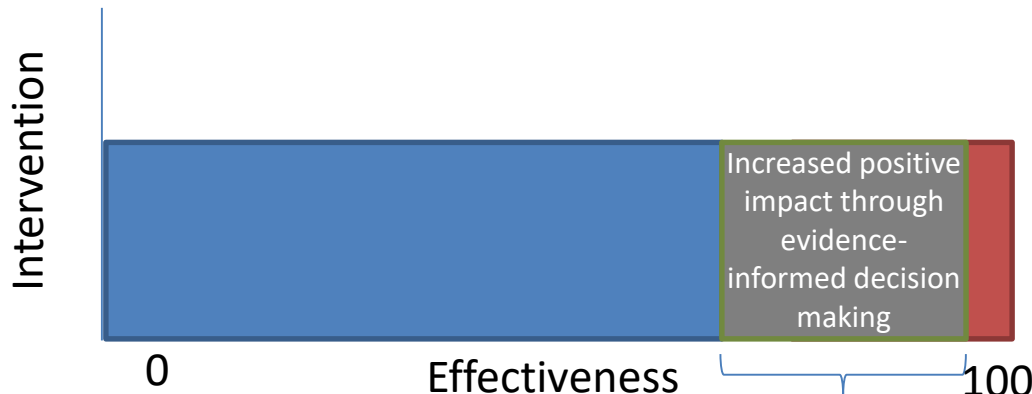


Scenario A: Ideal Context



Scenario B: Changed context with embedded research to support identification and removal of sources of barriers

Contextual Factors



Scenario B: Supporting leaders in making evidence-informed decisions that enhance effectiveness despite barriers

Leadership

HPSR as the way forward

- Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs): opportunity to refocus efforts on system-wide improvements
- Importance of the HPSR “health system lens”
- **What we have learned**
 - HPSR is key to supporting continuous improvements in health system performance
 - HPSR brings about contextualised knowledge on real world policies and programmes
- **Moving forward:**
 - HPSR can yield robust findings to inform policies and health systems strengthening efforts towards ambitious goal of universal health coverage by 2030

Final Thoughts

- HPSR DOES:
 - Provide knowledge and insights to stimulate thinking and inform choices
 - Provide tools for timely and context-specific analysis of challenges and solutions in complex settings
- IT DOES NOT:
 - Provide single solutions or answers to complex challenges and questions – there are no magic bullets to strengthening HS
- RESEARCH does not equal DECISION-MAKING
 - HPSR should be embedded within decision-making processes, but it cannot and should not be seen as a form of decision-making
 - In fragile settings, there's still space for implementers and decision makers to apply HPSR knowledge in making quick decisions to address dynamic needs



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Thank you!

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